86-014 Decision to Evacuate Areas During Major Fire Emergencies

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

FIELD OPERATIONS DIRECTIVE

Field Operations Support Services

DECISION TO EVACUATE AREAS DURING MAJOR FIRE EMERGENCIES

DEPARTMENTAL POLICY

The order to evacuate due to fire will emanate from the Los Angeles County Fire Department. Their personnel are qualified and have the expertise for determining the necessity and advisability of evacuation. When such an order is made they shall rely on the Sheriff's Department to accomplish the evacuation. Communication and liaison shall be maintained between command level personnel of both Departments to avoid any confusion or conflict of directives. When the Fire Department first considers evacuation of an area, they shall immediately notify the Sheriff's Department to determine the approximate lead time required.

IMMEDIATE HAZARD

In an emergent situation when Fire Department personnel are unavailable, command or supervisory members of this Department may recommend evacuation to concerned residents. Conditions must warrant the decision and as soon as possible, the Fire Department liaison officer will be advised of the action.

EVACUATION OF OWNER OR OCCUPANTS NOT MANDATORY

It is the belief of the Los Angeles County Fire Department that the owners or occupants of property in the area to be evacuated have the right to make their own decision about remaining in the area. Past experience has demonstrated to the Fire Department's satisfaction that the efforts of owners or occupants have frequently resulted in greatly reduced property damage.

Non-residents or persons without legitimate justification for being in the area must evacuate. We will advise citizens who have the right to be in the area of the danger to their welfare and assist them as possible. This will suffice, except in extenuating circumstances wherein individual decisions must be made regarding the necessity for specific persons to be evacuated, i.e., (infirm persons-mentally or physically, an obvious inability to comprehend the danger, children or minors, etc.).

ACCESS TO THE EVACUATED AREA

The decision as to who may or may not remain or have access to an evacuated area will remain with the Sheriff's Department. This decision is related to possible looting or other law enforcement problems which might arise as an aftermath of the fire. In order to avoid any confusion regarding the specifics of who has the right to be in or return to an evacuated area, This Department will follow the criteria outlined on the County of

Los Angeles Official Emergency Pass (form #76E500C). Any person having a legitimate right to access, who does not have a means of identification acceptable to this Department and/or the Fire Department, will be issued one of these emergency passes.